

F 159  
.Y9 B2  
Copy 1

## MASON AND DIXON'S LINE.

---

"The Old Survey and the Old Surveyors."—"The Days of Old in Little York."

---

BY J. BARNITZ BACON, OF NEW YORK,  
(Formerly of York, Pa.)

---

[In June, 1858, J. Barnitz Bacon, Esq., of New York, (a native of York, Pa.,) contributed to the *Herald* of that city, an original paper of great interest, under the title of "Mason and Dixon's Line."—"The Days of Old in Little York—Lord Baltimore and the Penn Family—The Star-Gazer's Stone—The Old Survey and the Old Surveyors—Bancroft Corrected—The Revolution—Fort Washington—Col. James D. Graham's Survey." As the papers containing an article of so much value have almost entirely disappeared, and as most of the matter of local interest to Adams county readers was never given anywhere else, it comes with an appeal for rescue from undeserved oblivion, which the editor of the COMPILER meets with a determination to print in neat pamphlet form, as most convenient for reference and most certain of preservation. With this short but all-sufficient preface, the author is introduced to the reader:]

In olden days, YORK, Pennsylvania, was the only town of note west of the Susquehanna and north of Baltimore. Its inhabitants were conspicuous for enterprise, intelligence and refinement, and

F159  
.Y9B2

remarkable for those old-fashioned notions of honor and patriotism which we, of to-day, so often prate of but so seldom practice. The population was principally of German origin, (some of them from Alzei, in the Old Pfalz or Palatinate of Germany,) and a large proportion of the Scotch-Irish immigration.

York was the home of many of the prominent men of the Revolution, such as Hon. James Smith, a signer of the Declaration of Independence; Gen. James Ewing, Gen. Henry Miller, Col. Thomas Hartley, Col. Robert McPherson, Maj. David Bush, killed at Brandywine; Maj. John Clark, aid-de-camp to Gen. Greene, and others. It was then known as York Town, or more familiarly as "Little York," to distinguish it from its greater namesake, New York. The American Congress was in session here from September 30, 1777, till June 27, 1778, while the British army held possession of Philadelphia.

Previous to the Revolution, it was noted as the centre where were organized the surveying parties who ran the lines between the provinces of Maryland and Pennsylvania, in 1760-63, and who finally from 1763 to 1768, aided in carrying out the decree of James II. which was the basis of settlement between the conflicting claims of Lord Baltimore and William Penn to the adjoining portions of the above named provinces.

For nearly eighty years, from 1683 to 1760, the border wars of these colonies had been waged with fierce obstinacy on each side—on the one, the Catholic gentleman of Maryland, gallant, brave and impetuous, his battle cry, "Hey for St. Marie's!" on the other, the stern, uncompromising Puritan, shouting as he fought, "In the name of God, fall on!" (a)

In 1722 the Penns began to push their settlements west of the Susquehanna, and laid out Springettsbury manor, (in which Yorktown is situated), in the present county of York, with a view, by granting titles, to occupy the debated ground against the encroachments then already commenced, of the Baltimore colonists.

The famous Capt. Thomas Cresap was a noted champion of Mary-

land in those days, and was a squatter at Wright's Ferry, on the west bank of the Susquehanna. The details of the celebrated fight at that place, of himself and son, (afterwards Captain Michael Cresap, the slayer of Logan, the Mingo chief,) with the Pennsylvanians in 1739, in which Thomas Cresap was captured, and led, a fettered but defiant captive, in triumphal procession into Lancaster, possess a romantic interest.

So fierce became the strife on the borders of these settlements that at last, in 1760, Frederick, Lord Baltimore (the great-grandson of Cecilius Calvert) and Thomas and Richard Penn (the grandsons of William Penn) each named commissioners to carry into effect the decrees, the execution of which, upon various pretexts, had been delayed for so many years.

In 1739 the first commission had been organized to run a temporary line dividing the provinces, but their labors were interrupted, and the results were not satisfactory.

The principal surveyors of 1760-63, as appears from the names subscribed each day to the minutes on file in the archives at Annapolis, were John Lukens and Archibald McClean on the part of the Penns, and Thomas Garnett and Jonathan Hall on the part of Lord Baltimore. John F. A. Priggs afterwards held Garnett's position. Their assistants were Archibald Emory, John Watson, John Stapler and William Shankland, together with a number of McCleans, as will be further seen.

The duties of these surveyors, in accordance with the agreement of the Proprietaries, and a decree of James II., and of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke in 1750, were as follows: "To begin at Cape Henlopen (*b*) and run a line due west to a point midway between that Cape and the shore of Chesapeake Bay." (The distance of this line across the peninsula was found to be 69 miles and 298 perches, and, of course, the distance of the "middle point" was 34 miles and 309 perches.)

From this "middle point" a line was to be run northerly in such direction that it should be tangent to a circle whose centre was de-

P 154  
.Y9B2

remarkable for those old-fashioned notions of honor and patriotism which we, of to-day, so often prate of but so seldom practice. The population was principally of German origin, (some of them from Alzei, in the Old Pfalz or Palatinate of Germany,) and a large proportion of the Scotch-Irish immigration.

York was the home of many of the prominent men of the Revolution, such as Hon. James Smith, a signer of the Declaration of Independence; Gen. James Ewing, Gen. Henry Miller, Col. Thomas Hartley, Col. Robert McPherson, Maj. David Bush, killed at Brandywine; Maj. John Clark, aid-de-camp to Gen. Greene, and others. It was then known as York Town, or more familiarly as "Little York," to distinguish it from its greater namesake, New York. The American Congress was in session here from September 30, 1777, till June 27, 1778, while the British army held possession of Philadelphia.

Previous to the Revolution, it was noted as the centre where were organized the surveying parties who ran the lines between the provinces of Maryland and Pennsylvania, in 1760-63, and who finally from 1763 to 1768, aided in carrying out the decree of James II. which was the basis of settlement between the conflicting claims of Lord Baltimore and William Penn to the adjoining portions of the above named provinces.

For nearly eighty years, from 1683 to 1760, the border wars of these colonies had been waged with fierce obstinacy on each side—on the one, the Catholic gentleman of Maryland, gallant, brave and impetuous, his battle cry, "Hey for St. Marie's!" on the other, the stern, uncompromising Puritan, shouting as he fought, "In the name of God, fall on!" (a)

In 1722 the Penns began to push their settlements west of the Susquehanna, and laid out Springettsbury manor, (in which Yorktown is situated), in the present county of York, with a view, by granting titles, to occupy the debated ground against the encroachments then already commenced, of the Baltimore colonists.

The famous Capt. Thomas Cresap was a noted champion of Mary-



land in those days, and was a squatter at Wright's Ferry, on the west bank of the Susquehanna. The details of the celebrated fight at that place, of himself and son, (afterwards Captain Michael Cresap, the slayer of Logan, the Mingo chief,) with the Pennsylvanians in 1739, in which Thomas Cresap was captured, and led, a fettered but defiant captive, in triumphal procession into Lancaster, possess a romantic interest.

So fierce became the strife on the borders of these settlements that at last, in 1760, Frederick, Lord Baltimore (the great-grandson of Cecilius Calvert) and Thomas and Richard Penn (the grandsons of William Penn) each named commissioners to carry into effect the decrees, the execution of which, upon various pretexts, had been delayed for so many years.

In 1739 the first commission had been organized to run a temporary line dividing the provinces, but their labors were interrupted, and the results were not satisfactory.

The principal surveyors of 1760-63, as appears from the names subscribed each day to the minutes on file in the archives at Annapolis, were John Lukens and Archibald McClean on the part of the Penns, and Thomas Garnett and Jonathan Hall on the part of Lord Baltimore. John F. A. Priggs afterwards held Garnett's position. Their assistants were Archibald Emory, John Watson, John Stapler and William Shankland, together with a number of McCleans, as will be further seen.

The duties of these surveyors, in accordance with the agreement of the Proprietaries, and a decree of James II., and of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke in 1750, were as follows: "To begin at Cape Henlopen (b) and run a line due west to a point midway between that Cape and the shore of Chesapeake Bay." (The distance of this line across the peninsula was found to be 69 miles and 298 perches, and, of course, the distance of the "middle point" was 34 miles and 309 perches.)

From this "middle point" a line was to be run northerly in such direction that it should be tangent to a circle whose centre was de-

cided to be the centre of the Court-House at New Castle, Delaware, and whose radius should be twelve English statute miles, measured horizontally. From the tangent point of contact of the northerly line with the periphery of the circle the line was to be continued due north, until it should reach a point fifteen English statute miles, measured horizontally, south of the parallel of latitude of the most southern part of Philadelphia.

From the northern extremity of the said due north line, a line was to be run due west, continuing upon a parallel of latitude, until the western limits of Pennsylvania and Maryland should respectively be reached, which was defined to be five degrees of longitude west of the River Delaware.

Also, that in case said due north line, from the tangent of the circle of New Castle, shall break in upon the said circle, in such case so much of the said circle as shall be cut off by the said line shall belong to and be part of the county of New Castle. (See Col. Graham's report.) The above mentioned northerly line from the "middle point" to the tangent point was found to be eighty-one miles, seventy-eight chains and thirty links.

The commissioners and surveyors met at New Castle on the 19th November, 1760, and soon afterwards commenced their operations. In order to ascertain the probable course of the northerly line, they ran a due north experimental line through the forest from the "middle point" of the peninsula (which they had ascertained) until they arrived at a point nearly opposite New Castle. This line was about eighty miles in length. Then diverging on a line to New Castle, they were able to calculate the approximate course of their northerly line, which they then proceeded to run from the same "middle point." Then, having surveyed their twelve mile radius from New Castle Court-House, they fixed the Tangent Point.

It is evident that in these preliminary operations, running through primeval woods, over a large extent of country, and measuring by chain and (over rough ground) with a rod, these early surveyors labored under many disadvantages. Born and brought up in our

forests, like the young surveyor George Washington, while they were not lacking in the necessary mathematical knowledge, and in the theory and practice of their profession, they were yet in possession of only those common instruments used in the simple surveys of the settlements. The compass, chain and staff were their principal resources. When the long straight lines on the peninsula were to be run, after cutting broad *vistos* (so called by the surveyors, and also by Mason & Dixon, as well as by Maskeleyne, the astronomer royal) (c) through the forests, they ran their straight lines by sighting along several poles placed in advance, intending to locate the lines between the established points more carefully at some more convenient time.

And thus they established the Tangent Point.

The work occupied them for nearly three years. But the magnates of the day, like many now-a-days, imagined there was not science and energy enough at home, and so, on the 4th August, 1763, the Penns and Lord Baltimore employed, in England, Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon, two mathematicians and surveyors, to take charge of the work. They arrived in Philadelphia November 15, received their instructions from the Commissioners December 1, 1763, and proceeded to the work assigned them, in connection with some of the old surveyors.

They brought with them a full supply of the best instruments of that day; among others, for astronomical observations, an excellent sector, of six feet radius, "which magnified twenty-five times," belonging to Hon. Mr. Penn, "the first which ever had the plumb line passing over and bisecting a point at the centre of the instrument." d) They brought also excellent standard chains, and a brass standard measure, of five feet, provided by the Royal Society.

Bancroft speaks of Mason and Dixon as having run the line in 1761. It was not commenced by them till 1764, and not completed by them until 1767, and not finally marked until 1768. See Bancroft, vol. II., p. 396. (Latrobe's address.)

Mason and Dixon first proceeded to determine the latitude of the

southernmost point of the city of Philadelphia, which was "the north wall of the house then occupied by Thomas Plumstead and Joseph Huddle, on the south side of Cedar street."

It is recorded in their journal that in November, 1863, they employed a carpenter to construct an observatory in the south part of Philadelphia. On the 6th of January, 1764, they determined its latitude, 39 deg. 56 min. 29 secs. N. This was the first astronomical calculation and the first observatory in America.—*Latrobe's Address*.

They then carefully examined the various lines run by their predecessors, which they adopted as correct. Hon. J. H. B. Latrobe, in his address before the Pennsylvania Historical Society in 1854, remarks :—

So far as the work of the old surveyors went, Mason and Dixon do not seem to have mended it; for they record in their proceedings of November 13, 1764, that the true tangent line, as ascertained by themselves, "would not pass one inch to the westward or eastward" of the post marked the tangent point set in the ground by those whom they superseded.

In the autumn of 1764 they ran their parallel of latitude west to the Susquehanna, thus commencing the famous line which bears their name, and which is now the boundary between Pennsylvania and Maryland.

In 1764-5 they ran the line due north from the tangent point to the northeast corner of Maryland, and in 1765 described such portion of the semicircle around New Castle as enabled them to fix the point which is now the point of intersection of the three States. They then, beginning where they had left off at the Susquehanna, continued their line due west. On the 27th of October they had reached the North Mountain.

On the 4th of June, 1766, they were at the summit of the Little Alleghany, and at the end of their summer's work. The Indians were now troublesome, and they were masters in the woods.—*Latrobe's Address*.

The Six Nations had come down from the north, about 1680, and conquered their less warlike neighbors of the Lenni-Lenape. The Delawares and the Susquehannocks, Ganoese, and other Indians in



Southern Pennsylvania, in their treaties always acknowledged the Six Nations as the possessors of that territory at that time. A negotiation with the northern Indians was therefore necessary, which Sir William Johnson successfully conducted, and in May, 1767, sent to the surveyors a delegation of Indians, with permission from the Six Nations to continue their surveys, and as an escort to protect them against the roving savages of the South.

On the 8th of June they recommenced their line at the Little Alleghany. On the 14th they had advanced as far as the summit of the Great Alleghany, where they were joined by their escort of fourteen Indians, with an interpreter. Mason and Dixon now had with them some thirty surveyors and fifteen axemen, besides the Indians. Mr. Latrobe says:—

The Indian escort seem to have had some vague apprehensions in regard to the results of all this gazing into the heavens and measuring upon the earth, and to have become restless and dissatisfied, and on the 25th of August the surveyors wrote that “Mr. John Green, one of the chiefs of the Mohawk nation, and his nephew, leave them in order to return to their own country.” The roving Indians of the wilderness began also to give the party of white men uneasiness, and on the 29th of September twenty-six of the surveyors quit the work for fear of the Shawnees. At length they reach a point 244 miles from the Delaware, and within 36 miles of the whole distance to be run. And here, in the bottom of a valley, on the borders of a stream marked Dunkard creek on their map, they come to an Indian war path, winding its way through the forest. And here their Indian escort tell them that it is the will of the Six Nations that the surveys should be stayed. There is no alternative; and retracing their steps, they return to Philadelphia; and, reporting to the Commissioners, receive an honorable discharge on 26th December, 1767.

The following extract from an original manuscript diary in possession of a gentleman of this city refers to the escort named above:

NEW YORK, Friday, 13th Dec., 1767.

This day came to town from Philadelphia eleven Mohawk Indians, who left Sir William Johnson's the 25th of May last, and went down the Susquehanna to Ham's ferry, where Hugh Crawford, their conductor, joined them. 'Tis said that the day after their arrival

there three of the Mohawk chiefs were met by accident by the Cherokees, who thereupon very ceremoniously offered and smoked with them the calumet of peace.

On the 19th of June last the Mohawks went to Yorktown, Pa., and afterwards proceeded with two surveyors (Mr. Mason and Mr. Dixon) to run the line between Lord Baltimore and Mr. Penn. As they run this line through the Indians' lands, Sir William thought proper to send these Indian chiefs down. The famous Hendrick is among them, and some other principal head men of the Mohawk nation, who, finding the winter coming on, left the surveyors, in order to return home this way.

The remainder of the line was run by other surveyors in 1782, but not completed nor marked till 1784. Mr. Latrobe says:—

At the end of every fifth mile a stone was planted, graven with the arms of the Penn family on one side, and of Lord Baltimore on the other. The intermediate miles were marked with smaller stones, having an M on one side and a P on the other. The stones were all sent from England. This was done as far as Sideling Hill, but here all wheel transportation ceasing in 1766, the further marking was the vista, eight yards wide, with piles of stone on the crests of all the mountain ranges, built eight feet high, as far as the summit of the Alleghany, beyond which the line was marked with posts, around which stones and earth were thrown.

Mason and Dixon, while here, also took the opportunity to measure a degree of latitude, using the long tangent line in Delaware for that purpose. They found the length of a degree of latitude in the provinces of Pennsylvania and Maryland, mean latitude of 39 12, to be 363,771 feet, or 68:896 English statute miles.

They were allowed during their surveys twenty-one shillings each per day. The commissioners appear to have settled with them, without repudiating any portion of their pay—a fact which should be commended to the imitation of commissioners now-a-days.

The amount paid by the Penns alone under these proceedings, from 1760 to 1768, was £34,200, Pennsylvania currency. (*e*)

Mason and Dixon returned to England, and were subsequently elected members of the Royal Society. Mason was an assistant of Dr. Bradley at the Royal Observatory at Greenwich before he came to America.

After their operations here they were employed under the direction of the Royal Society to observe the transit of Venus across the sun at the Cape of Good Hope in 1769—(Latrobe). Mason died in Pennsylvania in 1787—(Encyclop. Americana).

Dixon died at Durham, England, in 1777—(Lalande *Bibliographie Astronomique*, p. 50; quoted in *Biographie Universelle*, "Mason," where it is said, on the same authority, "*que Dixon etait ne dans un mine de charbon.*")

The following letter is characteristic of their style, and also refers to one of the old surveyors who was associated with them:—

SIR—According to your desire, mentioned to Mr. Dixon at Chestertown, we have compared the sums of money paid by the Right Honorable Lord Baltimore and the Honorable Thomas and Richard Penn, Esqs., (toward dividing the provinces) to us and Mr. McLane since our arrival in America, and find on the whole that we have received £615 more of the proprietors of Pensilvania than of Lord Baltimore. We expect you will please to send £600 or £700, that Mr. McLane may receive it at Frederick Town (as you proposed) the 24th of this month, we having no cash to proceed with. We are, sir, your most obedient humble servants.

CHAS. MASON,

THE NORTH MOUNTAIN, April 14, 1766. JER. DIXON.

P. S.—Besides the above balance, the Pennsylvania proprietors have paid for erecting the observatory at Philadelphia, and carriage to Brandiwine, &c., &c.

To T. RIDOUT, Esq., Secretary to his Excellency Horatio Sharpe, Esq., Governor of Maryland, at Annapolis.

#### THE MODERN SURVEY.

In 1849 the stone at the northeast corner of Maryland having been removed, and a desire being manifested to have the former surveys revised, commissioners were appointed by the States of Delaware, Maryland and Pennsylvania, who called to their aid Lieut. Col. James D. Graham, of the United States Topographical Engineers. "Col. Graham's work, in 1849-50, corroborated, in all important particulars, the work of his predecessors. Some errors were discovered, however. The tangent point had been placed 157 feet

too far to the north, and the point of intersection of the three States 143 feet too far to the south.”—(Latrobe.) This affected merely the are of the circle reaching into Maryland, and resulted in flattening the are and making the State of Maryland one acre and eighty-seven hundredths larger than Mason and Dixon left the province of the same name. (See Col. Graham’s admirable report of the survey to the commissioners of the three States.) The other lines were found to be correct.

Among the ignorant and superstitious this neighborhood of the twelve mile circle round New Castle was always connected with an idea of some wierd and secret charm. The circle was a magic circle; the astronomers were like the magii of old. The armorial bearings on the stones had a mysterious meaning. The quartzose stone at the forks of the Brandywine, where many observations of the stars were taken, was then, and is to this day, called the “stargazers’ stone.” In 1768 the stone at the “middle point” of the peninsula was taken up in search of the hidden treasure of Captain Kyd; and in the trial of the pretended sorcerer, Dr. Dady, and others, in the Lancaster and York courts, in 1797, for swindling, the spirit dated his oracles from “thirteen miles from New Castle, Delaware.”

It seems as if some spirit of ill omen hovered around the spot where this “line of peace” was to begin, and prophecied “there shall be no peace!” And has it not been so?

#### THE OLD SURVEYORS.

The writer has thought it due to the memory of the old surveyors who were engaged on these important lines, to preserve such memorials of their history and fate as could be collected.

John Lukens, a native of Horsham, Philadelphia county, “served his time” with Nicholas Scull. “Scull resided at an early period at White Marsh, fourteen miles north of Philadelphia, on the property now known as Scheetz’s Mill. He spoke fluently several Indian languages, and was considered in his time the most skillful



surveyor in the Province." He was appointed Surveyor General in the beginning of the year 1748, and continued in office until December, 1761, when he was succeeded by John Lukens, who was Surveyor General of Pennsylvania up to 1785 and probably longer. Vol. I., Penna. Hist. Soc.

Of John Watson a communication to the above society records thus:—

John Watson, after the death of his father, was sent to school, and procured a greater stock of learning than was common to those times. He became the Deputy Surveyor of this county (Bucks), and by the force of a suitable docility of mind and quickness of perception, rather than from constant application, he acquired among learned men the character of a great scholar. At the time of his decease (in 1761) he was employed in running the line between Pennsylvania and Maryland. Being seized with influenza, and having taken cold while in a fever, and in extremely hot weather, he rode upwards of sixty miles in a day, to William Blackfan's, where he died.

(See also his obituary in the Pennsylvania (Philadelphia) *Gazette* of July 9, 1761.)

Of Archibald McClean's family records and public documents afford a more extended memorial. Previous to or at the time of the partial dispersion of the Highland clans in the rebellion of 1716, a portion of the clan McLean sought a home in Ireland. The father of Archibald was born there, and, with many of his clansmen, emigrated to America at an early age. After some years the McLeans, or—as this branch wrote their names—McCleans, with the McPhersons, McAlisters, McSherrys and others, found a home on the banks of Marsh Creek, then in York, now in Adams county, Pennsylvania, near the eastern slope of the South Mountain. Here they lived and died, cherishing their old Scottish memories and customs to the last. The "Flowers of Edinboro'" and "Shelty's Pipes" never failed to brighten the dimmed eye and quicken the feeble pulse of age to the third generation. The tomb of the eldest born always bore the armorial bearings of the family up to the period of the Revolution. The "cat and glove" of the Mc-

Pherson may still be traced through the moss of years. Said an aged gudewife to the writer, "if ye'll be ridin' by Mash Creek bury-in ground, ye'll see a hunder McCleans restin' side by side." They were all stout Presbyterians.

The McClean who came from Ireland begat seven sons, viz: Archibald, Moses, William, Samuel, John, James and Alexander. They were all surveyors, and all engaged as assistants to Archibald, at different periods, on the early surveys we have mentioned, and also on Mason and Dixon's line.

Archibald and Moses became Deputy Surveyors respectively, of the eastern and western portions of York county, which then comprised that portion of Pennsylvania extending from the Susquehanna west to Kittattany Mountains, (Indian, Kittochtimy.) Some time previous to the Revolution they laid out Carroll's Tract, a large body of land belonging to Charles Carroll of Carrollton, extending along the South Mountain, from the Maryland line northward for ten or fifteen miles. In this tract Archibald and William possessed fine farms. It was then on the borders of civilization. The belles of Yorktown, of that day, thought it fine sport to ride up to these "back settlements," (exposed, as they were, to the attacks of the Indians,) nearly fifty miles, on horseback, in a single day. Of such stern stuff were our Revolutionary matrons made.

We must here remark, that the late Rev. Dr. John Knox, of the Collegiate R. P. Dutch church in this city, was a native of Carroll's Tract.

James Buchanan, (fifteenth President of the United States,) was born but a few miles on the other (western) side of the mountain. The strong, sound common sense of the Scotch-Irish population of that region ranked them, as in other days, and will ever enlist them among the truest conservators of the republic.

All the McCleans were early and enthusiastic defenders of the liberties of their country. Col. Allen McLean, of Torleish, a half pay officer in the British army in Canada, endeavored in 1776 to raise a regiment of Highland emigrants, and sent emissaries to the

Scotch settlements in the colonies, to procure their enlistment in the cause of the king. But they could not forget Culloden, and repelled his offers with disdain.

Archibald became a member of the Pennsylvania Legislature in 1776, and was Recorder of York county from 1777 till 1785. (f)

On the shelves of the New York Historical Society is the only extant printed copy of a pamphlet, which is pertinent to our subject, and exhibits the embarrassments and customs of the time. We therefore copy it entire. It was printed at Lancaster, because there was then no press west of the Susquehanna, the press (Hall & Sellers') which accompanied Congress having left Yorktown with that body the preceding year.

The money power of England had been exercised, through the Tories resident in the colonies, to depreciate the value of continental money, and to embarrass and break the independent spirit of the patriots. This will account for the energetic action and strong language embodied in these resolutions and address:—

YORK, 18th June, 1779.

A meeting of the inhabitants of this town, being formerly called to consider of prudent and effectual measures for putting a stop to forestalling, extortion, and the depreciation of the continental currency, it was agreed that a committee should be appointed to draw up resolves for that purpose, and transmit the same to the several battalions of this county for their concurrence, and that deputies from the said battalions, properly authorized and instructed, should be appointed to meet with the said committee of the town, to consider of proper measures for the carrying the same into execution.

At a meeting of the committee of York Town and the deputies from the Second, Sixth and Eighth battalions of the militia of York county, present as follows:

*For Yorktown.*

Henry Miller, John Hay, Wm. Alexander, Robert Galbreath, Wooleree Meng, Christopher Lauman, Peter Mondorf, Robert Henry, David Jameson, William Scott, Archibald McClean.

*For the Second Battalion.*

Thomas Gould and James Sharp.

*For the Fifth Battalion.*

Colonel Joseph Jeffries and Captain John Erman.

*For the Sixth Battalion.*

Colonel Wm. Ross, Captain Joseph Reed, Joseph Reed, Ferryman, Wm. Gemble, Andrew Thompson, John Thompson and Nicholas Strehr.

*For the Eighth Battalion.*

Major John Clark, John Henderson, John Hinckle, Andrew Shriber and Jacob Rudisel.

Archibald McClean voted chairman for the present meeting.

The resolves of the town meeting of Philadelphia were read, and we concur with them in opinion.

That the prices of goods and provisions have, within the space of five or six months last past, arisen to an enormous height, far beyond what they ought to be, in proportion to the quantity of the money or the circumstances of the times.

1st, Resolved, That the public have a right to inquire into the causes of such extraordinary abuses, and prevent them; that the prices of all goods and necessities of life, in the last month, without any real or apparent cause, have arisen very considerably, and it is our resolution not to be eaten up by monopolizers and forestallers; therefore,

2dly, Resolved, That we unconditionally insist and demand that the advanced or monopolized prices of the month last past, and of this month, be instantly taken off, and that the prices of those articles be reduced to what they were the first day of May last.

3dly, Resolved, That a committee of three or more reputable persons from each battalion be appointed (where the same is not already done), who shall meet together at York Town on the 28th day the instant, June, to ascertain the retail prices of all goods and necessities of life as they stood on the first day of May last, and to publish the same for the government of buyer and seller, and to receive in writing all complaints against such dealers as may refuse to comply with or obstruct the execution of this regulation, and report the same to the next district meeting.

4thly, Resolved, That we will support the committee in the execution of their duty, encourage fair and honest commerce, and suppress to the utmost of our power, and at the hazard of our lives, engrossing, monopolizing, forestalling and depreciation.

5thly, Resolved, That it is the interest of town and country to concur in measures for the mutual relief of both; that the proceedings of this committee be transcribed and sent to the several districts of this county for their consideration and assistance therein.

6thly, Resolved, That this meeting will support the laws of this



Commonwealth, and aid the civil magistrates and officers in the execution thereof, and the assistance of the several districts in this county is requested for this purpose.

7thly, Resolved, That no goods, or any of the necessities of life be removed for sale into any district, county or State that does not enter into these or similar resolutions, and that the committee be authorized to seize any goods or provisions so removed, or attempted to be removed, except they be for supplying the army.

8thly, Resolved, unanimously, That our representatives in General Assembly be instructed to use their endeavors to procure a law at their next sitting, founded on justice and sound policy, for preventing in future the sale or passing of foreign goods and commodities through a number of hands, each of whom by laying a large profit thereon, hath a tendency greatly to enhance the prices; and that they be further instructed to limit the same unto only one purchaser, from the importer to the retailer.

Signed by order of the meeting.

ARCHIBALD McCLEAN, Chairman.

JUNE 26, 1779.

It having been suggested that the committee for the town of York had been elected only for the purpose of corresponding with the other battalions of this county, and forming committees throughout the same, and reporting their sense respecting the proposed regulation of prices, and that when the same was done their power ceased, and that another committee should be elected, in order to fix and ascertain the real prices of all goods and commodities within the same; whereupon, after due notice given for that purpose, a respectable number of the inhabitants of the town and district met at the Court-House, and resolved as follows, viz:—

1st, Resolved, That a committee, consisting of thirteen persons, be chosen by ballot, to represent this town, the said committee to continue until the end of the next sitting of the General Assembly, or until effectual measures shall be taken by that body for preventing forestalling, extortion and depreciation.

2dly, Resolved, That the said committee, or a majority of them, do confer with the deputies from the other parts of the county, and if it shall appear to be the sense of a majority of the town and county that prudent regulations of trade, as well of articles imported as of the produce of the country, be entered into, then that the said committee shall agree thereto, and that they be empowered to carry the same into execution.

The ballots being taken, the following persons were chosen of the

committee, viz:—David Jameson and Wm. Scott, Esqs., Christopher Lauman, Colonel Henry Miller and John Hay, Archibald McClean, Esq., Dr. Peter Mundorff Wm. Alexander, George Gump, Robert Galbreath, Esq., Dr. Robert Henry, John Heckendorn and Joseph Welshantz.

JUNE 28, 1779.

At a meeting of the committee of Yorktown and the deputies from the several battalions of this county, agreeable to a former resolve, present (the committee of the town above named:—

1st battalion—Had not received notice.

2d do —James Sharp.

3d do —John McKissock and Jacob Beaver.

4th do —James Dixon and John McClure.

5th do —Aquilla Wiley, Michael Geise'man and Jacob Hauffelt.

6th do —Andrew Thompson, Wm. Smyley and Joseph Reed, Esq.

7th do —James Russell and Moses McClean.

8th do —Nicholas Bedinger, Wm. Guyon and John Clark, Jr.

Archibald McClean, Esq., unanimously chosen Chairman.

The resolves of the preceding meetings were again read, and agreed to by all present, excepting by the deputies of the Sixth battalion.

After which it was resolved as followeth, viz:—

1st, Resolved, unanimously, That we will endeavor by all prudent and just methods to investigate the conduct of all persons amongst us, who are trusted with public money and public property, and if any misapplication or peculation thereof appears, will report the same, with proofs thereof, to the justices, that a speedy stop may be put to such nefarious practices, and the delinquents brought to condign and exemplary punishment.

2dly, Resolved, unanimously, That it be recommended to the inhabitants of this county that they, as soon as possible, put into the loan office as much of their money as they can spare on loan, and those who have already lodged money in the office to be exchanged will, it is hoped, leave the greater part of the same there, and take certificates on interest. [NOTE—This was a loan for the support of government and the army.]

3dly, Resolved, unanimously, That our representatives in the General Assembly be instructed to use their utmost endeavors to procure a law to tax all moneys, except such as are paid into the loan office, and also a law to lay a double tax on all disaffected persons

who have not taken the oath of allegiance and fidelity to this State, as prescribed by law, the relaxation of the law with respect to persons of that character being generally complained of.

JUNE 29, 1779.

The sub-committee, unto which was committed the ascertaining the retail prices, &c., reported as followeth, viz:—

Bar iron at 7s. 6d. per lb. and £750 per ton.

Best calf skin at £25 each, and in proportion for such as are of inferior quality.

Kip skin at 42s. 6d. per lb.

Soal leather, 27s. 6d. per lb.

Harness leather, 32s. 6d. per lb.

Upper leather, 37s. 6d. per lb.

Saddlers and shoemakers to lower their prices in proportion to the leather.

Sugar, from 22s. 6d. to 27s per lb. according to quality.

Coffee at 21s. 3d. per lb.

Wheat, per bushel, £6.

Rye, per bushel, £5.

Indian corn, per bushel, £4 10s.

Oats, per bushel, £2 10s.

Speltz, per bushel, £2 10s.

Rye liquor, per gallon, £3 15s.

Reapers and mowers an half bushel of wheat, or value thereof, per day.

4thly, Resolved, unanimously, That the said prices before the present be agreed to and published, together with an address to the good people of this county.

#### TO THE FRIENDS OF LIBERTY IN THE COUNTY OF YORK.

GENTLEMAN—Need we remind our fellow-citizens that the inhabitants of this county took a very early and decisive part in the cause of liberty and their country, at a time when the coasts of the continent were overspread with formidable navies, and our cities and fields encompassed with numerous armies, all bent on our destruction; at a time when we were almost without arms, without ammunition, and without an ally, and in want of almost every necessary for carrying on a war; at a time when the gloomy tyrant, with his infernal Council, were at peace with all the European Powers, and actually possessed of an army of 50,000 armed and disciplined ruffians, nursed and educated in the trades of murder, robbery, rape and assassination, carrying fire and desolation through



almost every part of the Continent, openly aided by their copper-faced allies (the savages) and more privately by the tories and paricides amongst us.

In a contest so unequal, it was the good pleasure of Providence to inspire our troops with bravery and resolution in their various conflicts against so formidable a foe. A handful of Americans repulsed and disgraced a part of their fleet before Fort Moultrie. Trenton, Princeton and Saratoga will long perpetuate the disgrace of the British and the Hessian arms. One of the first princes in Europe has acknowledged our Independence, and entered into an alliance of perfect equality. Those haughty lords of the sea, who impiously presumed to claim omnipotence on that element, have been blasted in America and disgraced in Europe. Those boasted conquerors were compelled to evacuate Philadelphia, and by a midnight flight save themselves from utter ruin at Monmouth.

Yet, while the virtuous and the brave have been sacrificing life and fortune to procure the blessings of liberty to their countrymen and posterity, a set of extortioners, forestallers, engrossers and depreciators of our currency, like swarms of locusts from the bottomless pit, threaten to obscure our political horizon and eat up every plant of liberty. Some for the love of money (the root of all evil,) and others from motives still more detestable to freemen, have combined to create an artificial famine in the midst of plenty, and to depreciate our currency so as to render it unfit for a medium of trade, and, in short, to enhance all the necessities and conveniences of life to a most enormous extreme.

In the metropolis and in many of the counties of this State, they have chosen committees to consider of ways and means to prevent the increase of the evils so severely felt and to alleviate the symptoms, until the Legislative body, in conjunction with the other States, shall apply a radical cure.

A very great majority of the friends of liberty in York county have come to sundry resolutions for the purpose of restoring credit to our money, to encourage fair trade and dealing, and prevent the evils of engrossing, monopolizing and depreciation. And I am directed by the authority of the committee for ascertaining the retail prices of all goods and necessities of life, to publish the following prices and rates, for the information of buyer and seller; and in case any person shall presume to contravene the sense of the public herein, they must expect to be treated as inimical to the liberties of America, and held up to the public in that light, and otherwise



dealt with according to the utmost rigor of the law. [See the prices before inserted.]

It is expected that all other goods not enumerated will be sold as they were on the first day of May last, and that all tradesmen will promote the design of the committee by lowering their prices; and also it is recommended to the inhabitants of this county to purchase no more than they want for immediate use, as a second regulation will be entered into very soon, it having already taken place in Philadelphia.

Signed by order and in behalf of the committee.

ARCHIBALD McCLEAN, Chairman.

MONDAY, July 12, 1779.

In committee, Resolved, That two of the members for the town do sit at the Court House every afternoon, from six until seven o'clock, in rotation, agreeable to the order of the last election, in order to receive complaints made against delinquents from time to time, and when the case requireth, report the same to the Chairman, that, if necessary, the whole committee may be called. A true copy from the minutes.

ARCHIBALD McCLEAN, Chairman.

LANCASTER, Printed by Francis Bailey.

Notwithstanding the above efforts, Archibald McClean lost all his property, as did hundreds of other patriots throughout the land, by the depreciation of the Continental currency.

Archibald's eldest daughter, Miss Polly McClean, with all the enthusiasm of the women of those days, devoted her youthful energies to the cause of her country. She, with Mrs. Eleanor Smith, (wife of Hon. James Smith, and formerly Miss Eleanor Armor, of New Castle, Del.,) and Miss Betty Bedinger, (afterwards married to Major John Clark,) with other patriotic women of Yorktown, united in associated effort in supplying the suffering soldiers of the army with hospital stores, clothing, and other necessities. The Congress was in session at Yorktown, large barracks were erected there, (g) and the Board of War, with straightened means, were making every effort to relieve and cheer the army in the gloomy aspect of affairs. The burghers of Yorktown were, therefore, called upon for their full share of sacrifices. The young men of the town all marched off to the wars at an early period. A rifle company

under Col. Henry Miller, left Yorktown, for Cambridge, Mass., on June 1, 1775, and was attached to Col. Thompson's regiment. Many of them in defending New York, suffered imprisonment and death in the sugar houses and prison ships of that city. A romantic incident in this connection shows that "the course of true love" sometimes does run smooth. An early attachment existed between Miss McClean and Ensign Jacob Barnitz, of Col. Swope's regiment of the Flying Camp, a youth of eighteen years. He too, however, followed the drum to New York, and, on the heights of Fort Washington, in the desperate battle of Nov. 16, 1776, he received a ball in each leg. He was stripped of everything but his stockings, which were filled with blood, and lay where he fell all night and until the next evening, when a Hessian soldier approached him, and was about to bayonet him. A British officer, however, taking compassion upon the helpless youth, interfered and saved his life. He was thrown into a wagon and taken a prisoner to the city, where he was confined with the other survivors of the American army.

Be assured that there is no rock, nor gnarled cedar, nor grassy mound, on all those beautiful and sacred heights of Fort Washington that the descendants of the 8,000 who there fought and fell on that fatal day, do not cherish and venerate for the memory of their fathers' blood.

Here the young officer remained in suffering and without effectual surgical aid until the 16th of February, 1778, when he was exchanged, and, still helpless, removed on a litter to his native home, after a painful journey of four weeks. (Congressional documents.) A year or two after, though still "a wounded soldier," he was united to the "girl he left behind him." This youthful hero was obliged to lose his leg thirty-two years afterwards, in consequence of his wounds. He and his patriotic partner lived in honor and usefulness to the age of seventy, with numerous sons and daughters to "rise up and call them blessed." Their oldest son was Hon.

Charles A. Barnitz, a Whig member of the Twenty-third Congress, representing York and Adams counties.

Archibald McClean's youngest daughter is Mrs. Hester R. Scudder, of Princeton, New Jersey. She and her venerable husband, Dr. Jacob Scudder, still live, far beyond three score and ten, and fast verging to their century of honor, at the hospitable home near Princeton, where they have resided for more than fifty years.

Moses McClean, another of our old surveyors, in 1776 became a Captain in Colonel Thomas Hartley's 11th Regiment of the Pennsylvania line. From 1780 to 1783 he was a member of the Pennsylvania Legislature. He died in Chillicothe, Ohio, in 1809-10. Hon. Wm. McClean (of the Adams county courts,) was his son. Hon. Moses McClean, a Democratic member of the Twenty-ninth Congress, from York and Adams, was his grandson. (*h*)

From the latter gentleman I learn that Wm. McClean, the surveyor, lived and died a farmer on Carroll's Tract. "Samuel, John, James and Alexander removed to Fayette and Washington counties, Pennsylvania, and were employed in the early settlement of those counties as surveyors. Alexander, the youngest of the seven, was for a long time Register and Recorder of Fayette county. At that time the office was held under appointment from the Executive, and this good old man retained the office through all the changes of administration. No man was found hardy enough to ask his removal, until he was compelled by age and infirmities to resign it of his own accord."

And so ends this chapter of our memories of the old survey and of the old surveyors.

If the busy world of to-day deems that while, like Old Mortality, we have thus been newly gravning their moss-grown tombs, we have performed a thriftless task, let them remember that from such labors the world learns its best lesson, the lesson so to live, that when we lie down those who come after us can read on our resting places only the legend "Honor!"

NEW YORK, May 25, 1858.



## NOTES.

- (a) J. H. B. Latrobe's address.  
(b) Now Cape Cornelius. From some cause these Capes have exchanged names since those days.  
(c) Royal Philosophical Transactions, vol. 58.  
(d) do do do  
(e) From a paper in the Historical Magazine of this city for February, 1858, by Hon. Wm. Darlington, of West Chester, Penn.  
(f) From History of York county, by A. J. Glassburner, Esq.  
(g) Journal of Congress, Dec. 11, 1777.
- 

(h) Hon. Wm. McClean, present President and sole Judge of the Courts of Adams county, is a great grandson of Lord Cornwallis. He died March 21, 1881.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 365 373 0

